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to the Academy in the way of a cure. At his particular request the Council of the Academy has forwarded his letter to THE ART WORLD which publishes it with a hope that a way be found to make the matter effective. A plan of the sort that Mr. Lothrop has outlined may do something to improve the average of work at the spring and winter exhibitions; in any case it should get the painters and sculptors who live in other cities of the Union in closer touch with those who work near or in New York.

Boston, November 25.

TO THE COUNCIL OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN:

Gentlemen—We would like to make a few suggestions to your Academy from our side of the fence.

First: We would suggest that your Academy appoint one or more Judges of Art for Boston and other prominent cities who should act as preliminary Judges for their respective districts. They should be allowed to select a specified number of paintings for guaranteed specially allotted spaces for the work of such districts. Each applicant might be charged a small fee for such inspection of their work—if such charges are needed. This plan would save the distant artists large bills for freight, expressage, agents, etc., which are now often lost expense. Express companies have shown themselves very evasive of financial obligations when they have smashed up crates of paintings, frames, etc. In three cases we could only collect once for our charges. In two other cases they fought disreputably and in one paid only five dollars on a fifty-dollar claim, despite a powerful fight for the rights of the artist.

Many artists of the first class will not ship their work under present conditions. I have known of many refusals by old experienced artists.

Second: Judges who are to pass on paintings under any system should be assisted by fair scientific Printed Standards of measurements and percentages. A painting should be rated scientifically by some recognized Art Standard and not be the football of whims, caprices, etc. Often rare paintings made after months of labor are thrown out and some cheap daub of a "Ma and Baby" is handed bouquets of honor. We believe that if your Academy adopts some national system of division of territory, or of area, population, etc., and gives to each such district its quota (if securable) in fair proportion, it would protect the artists in each district by local judges; these could guarantee some form of security and have forms printed which would rate paintings as to originality, quality of colors, harmony of design, color, etc., defects or imperfections. Proper allowance should be made for size, permanency of colors, to guarantee compliance of works to recognized standards of permanency, strength, etc. Judges might visit local studios or residences and save the artists large sums of money. Under the present system it costs about ten to twenty-five dollars to ship and reship a small 2x3-foot painting from Boston to you, not to mention the value of the painting or the time of the artist. Even at that—the Exhibition may be too crowded to exhibit the most meritorious works, and the artist is "stung" all round and naturally "gets sore"! Many artists would prefer to pay small sums for local inspection and thus save costs of transportation, etc.

Third: Fugitive and transient colors should be outlawed by all art associations. No prizes, medals, awards, cash donations or even honors should be given to art works of this low order. We believe the time has come when decisive steps should be taken to place inferior, defective and fugitive canvases in the outlaw class. Many art associations have placed themselves in wrong with the art-buying public and with art museums and rich art buyers by allowing them to be robbed and deceived with such fugitive and transient colors; they are inferior art works. Many high-priced paintings are to-day hopeless art wrecks after only twenty or twenty-five years of service. They were sometimes awarded fine medals, big prizes and high prices, but the paintings were really humbugs and the buyers defrauded. We believe that the honor and prestige of your Academy is at stake and that all artists should be given printed lists telling what are the fugitive and transient colors and why their use is prohibited in the Academy work.

The London firm of Winsor & Newton publish such lists and will supply them to any art association upon request. The fact is that bombastic and loud-mouthed artists have been allowed to get away with some rotten work. Your

association, other museums and millionaire buyers have been "stung" badly by these swindlers. We believe that the stamp of efficiency should be placed on art works and no painting should be granted any honors which does not stand the said test of durable painting—colors which will be just as good a hundred years from now as thirty days from now. We ask that these art standards shall be made an official system of all art academies, associations, museums, etc. By no other system can we guarantee the perfection and the permanency of American Art.

Yours truly

GEORGE E. LOTHROP

## TURQUOISE MOSAICS OF THE INDIANS

The Indians of North and South America are often gifted with a strong, intuitive sense for color and even to-day surprise one with their success in making pottery, textiles and other objects beautiful. At an early date those of Mexico discovered the qualities of opals and turquoise. At Los Cerrillos in New Mexico there is a mountain they called *Chalchihuitl* after the precious material found there. From the workings it is evident that the natives resorted thither for many ages in order to get the brilliant green or blue mineral and the result is that great numbers of wooden objects studded and set with turquoise have been found for welcome exhibits in the museums. In the September bulletin issued by the Pan-American Union at Washington an illustrated paper by Prof. J. E. Pogue of Northwestern University allows one to see what a varied use was made of the turquoise as personal ornaments and for incrusting objects with color, even to the point of decorations of temples. In addition they used jadeite, malachite, garnet, obsidian and shell. Masks as well as other objects carried in their dances were inlaid very richly and when further decorated with tufts of feathers must have offered an example of barbaric magnificence not lightly to be ignored. Dwarfed by their surroundings and their education in the matter of color-sense the whites do not compete with many of the less civilized races whose feeling for color is fostered instead of being repressed by their religion and modes of life. Turquoise is a favorite adjunct to the decoration of charms, amulets and fetiches. The Navajos, we are told by Prof. Pogue, "have a pretty belief that turquoise is particularly sacred to the wind spirit and they offer many stones to this deity whose anger must thus be appeased in order that the wind may stop blowing and rain result. When the wind is blowing the Indians say it is searching for turquoise."

## SUBSTITUTES FOR WOOD IN HOUSES

A report made by Mr. Rolf Theland to the Department of Agriculture on materials such as steel, concrete and hollow tiles which have been taking the place of wood for houses and furniture contains facts that will surprise many people who have not followed the drift of home-building. The use of cement for concrete houses has increased 290 per cent. since 1900, that of fired clay 170 per cent. "At the best" he reports "the wooden building is no more than holding its own while the total building curve is rising. Retail lumber dealers estimate the decrease in sales of lumber for construction